THE WORKERS'

DREADNOUGHT

Socialism, Internationalism, Votes for All.

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SOLDIERS ASK WHAT THEY ARE FIGHTING FOR.

1914—1917.

HUSHED are the silvery notes that filled the world
With peace; those tiny throats that once could ring
A chord of human gladness now are hurled
Before its heedless pace, no more to sing.
On, on it comes, across the wasted sheaves,
The furrow that was once a sparkling stream;
And in its trail, a darkened cloud, that weaves
A spell of terror—some incarnate dream.
For War—the very name embodies Hell—
With unrestrained passion, sweeps the sky
To torture man, and sound the solemn knell
Of Death, spurning a woman's piteous cry.
Man cleaves the heart of man. The dying sob
Of those who, broken, lie, remains unheard,
Crushed by a cannon's roar. The awful throb
Of some inhuman missile has but stirred
This carnage into some more ghastly form,
And Love lies slain by those who deemed her all.

But look! A tiny spark of hope remains
Among the ashes of a world's despair;
And in that gleam, unsullied by the stains,
The lusts of war, there lies an answered prayer.
The stream flows on, tho' crimsoned by the blood
Of guiltless men. And o'er the azure seas,
The echoes of a thousand voices flood
The world with tidings of a new born peace,
The fellowship of man. And it shall bring
New hope, new life, new love, new everything.

DONALD E. MILNER.

PRIVATE C——, R.F.A., writes from "Somewhere in France":—

"It is high time the Government told the people what our aims are and what we are fighting for. Nine out of every ten men I have talked with on the subject do not know. You will no doubt be surprised when I tell you that on Monday evening next I am having a debate with another fellow on this subject, and I am moving the following motion:—

That we assembled here declare that the time has now arrived for the Government to state publicly its aims in the war; furthermore to define the precise terms on which Germany can have peace.

I am assured of a jolly good audience as hundreds of men are eagerly interested in the discussion."

A YOUNG British military airman, writing from France to Mrs. Clara Cole, says:—

"As the war continues, I feel more and more the vital importance of your aims, and only wish the whole world would realise the value of that doctrine which you speak of in your preface. It is a noble thing to strive for, and although, in the earlier days of the war, I did not comprehend the ghastliness of it all, I now fully sympathise with that cause for which you fight. The other night, as I looked towards the western horizon, the beauty and calmness of the trees, which stood against the wondrous background of the afterglow, greatly impressed me. It was—for a moment—peace, but the contrast which the other surroundings produced was too great, and, unable to bear the thoughts of former happy days, I returned into the abnormal state in which we are bound to live. I dare not think too long of that which might have been. I am bound by one undying longing for peace, and until it comes I can but live in restless anxiety."

A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR in the Non-Combatant Corps writes:—

"We have an officer, a major, a serjeant, and about six N.C.O.s to look after us and there are other men in higher ranks. It finds a nice soft job for those men to look after such harmless people as we. We work in gangs and of course we must have a N.C.O. to watch us. It would not be military without, and the officer and other officials properly at play. What a splendid organisation the N.C.C. is! I expect the people will be asked to pay for this after the war. I am a ratepayer myself, and it will be very annoying to one who knows what he is asked to pay for. I think it is time that the people woke up and made some inquiries into the business. They will know when it is too late."

BAKEWELL WOMEN AND PROFITEERS

THE women of Bakewell are making a determined stand against the increase in the retail price of milk. A big protest meeting of women was held at which it was decided to do all that was possible to thwart the intention of the milk retailers to raise the price of milk to 5*d*. and subsequently to 6*d*. per quart, the pre-war price being 3½*d*. It was urged that the farmers of Bakewell were taking "an undue advantage" of the maximum price fixed for milk. Mr. Joseph Mellor, a member of the Bakewell Urban Council and also the local Food Control Committee, showed by the following data that any increase in price was merely extortionate: In pre-war times the cost of keeping five cows in Bakewell was as follows: Men's labour, for attendance, &c., £54 12*s*.; rent of land at two guineas per acre, £31 10*s*.; rates, £7 10*s*.; foodstuffs, £25; loss by wear and tear, £25; labour for harvest, £15; interest on capital, £10; total, £168 12*s*. Now the present war estimated cost was made up as follows for five cows: Men's labour, &c. £78; rent, £31 10*s*.; rates, £7 10*s*. (these two items being unchanged); foodstuffs, £37; loss by wear and tear, £50; labour for harvest, £20; interest on capital, £20; total, £244 10*s*. In pre-war times these five cows would produce on an average 1,000 gallons of milk each, and at the old price of 3*d*. per quart left a profit of £81 8*s*. Now, with war-time the rise of milk in October would amount to £41 13*s*., and the December rise would be £125. The total profit he had worked out at £255, which gave a profit of £51 for each cow. The women present pledged themselves to purchase only half their usual milk supplies; if this had not the desired result more drastic action would be taken. They are determined at all costs to keep down the price of the children's chief food. We hope they will be successful and that others will take example from their brave stand.

Of Special Interest This Week!

OUR REPLY TO LLOYD GEORGE.

MILITARISM TO BRITANNIA—"Madam, I want *more*, that I may protect you from this Tyrant."

(Prussian Militarism may be reflected in our own).

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

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UNDER THE MILLSTONE.

THE Prime Minister has now given the nation to understand that the war is being carried on to restore Alsace and Lorraine to France and that we shall continue fighting till that is accomplished, "however long the war may last."

We might have had a war for that object any time since 1870. We need not have waited till now when the men who were responsible for the deed are mouldering in the grave with the British politicians whose sympathies were with Germany in that war and who did nothing to prevent the annexation.

When this war began we were told by Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues that we were fighting to free Belgium from a foreign invasion, to prevent the crushing of France, even for our very existence as a nation, as Germany was determined to secure a world dominion, and having subjugated France, the armies of the Kaiser would come over seas to conquer us.

That story has now lost its terrors; most thoughtful people have come to realise that the causes and objects of the war are deeper and more complex—that life is not a fairy story in which wickedness is wrought for mere love of wickedness, and in which one nation is composed entirely of villains and the other of saints. And though Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues are working themselves into a very frenzy of oratorical enthusiasm for the redemption of "the oppressed children of France from the degradation of a foreign yoke"; even those who rushed most fervently into war service in the early days, are now inclined to pause, in order that they may recall the history of the provinces to regain which we are asked to prolong the agony of the war. Briefly let us recapitulate it as given in summary in Haydn's 'Dictionary of Dates':—

"Lorraine (Lotharingia) became a kingdom under Lothaire 855; divided at his death in 869, part of it became a duchy. From the first hereditary Duke Gerard, nominated by Emperor Henry III. in 1048, descended the house of Lorraine, then of Tuscany. Lorraine was given to the dethroned King of Poland, Stanislaus I., for life and at his death in 1766 united to France. In 1871 about the fifth part of the province annexed to Germany."

"Alsace (Elsass), formerly part of kingdom of Austrasia. Incorporated with German Empire in tenth century. A portion handed over to France in 1648, and the whole in 1697. In 1871 annexed to Germany; Alsatians allowed to choose their nationality in 1872, and many returned to France."

The provinces have passed from ruler to ruler many times. Lorraine has been held by French, German, Italian, and Polish masters. Did the toiling peasants ever find that their lot was changed with the nationality of their masters? As they were ignored in the past, treated as mere attributes of the lands coveted by the Lords of the Earth, so they are ignored by the Governments and rulers of to-day. The peace formula of the Russian Revolutionaries would free the peoples from their subjection; it would give the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine the right to decide their own destiny—to vote as to whether they desire to enter into the citizenship of France or of Germany, or to establish an independent self-governing republic.

To the Lords of the Earth, whose minds are busy with oilwells and rubber plantations, with tariffs, markets for trade, and railway concessions, such questions as that of taking a vote of the humble wage workers appear to be quite outside the realm of practical politics. In the midst of a great war, says Mr. Lloyd George, the Government cannot make the same promises in regard to social projects as it could in times of peace. The establishment of a Ministry of Health becomes a doubtful matter. Our Cabinet Ministers spend their enthusiasms in considering the liberation of oppressed peoples afar off; they have not the time to undertake the duty of liberating the oppressed of our own land. Politicians neglect the humble folk who retain them in the seats of the mighty until there is a strike or a mutiny which will hinder the Lords of the Earth in the business they have on hand.

The fact that the Insurance Act which was only passed into law in 1911, should already be in crying need of amendment convicts its author of very sorry workmanship. The Act is in need of amendment because it is a bad Act and the flaws which have caused its failure were strenuously opposed at the time of its passage. This badly drafted Act is being badly administered, according to the tragically general rule that if circumstances have left a loophole for avoiding payments to applicants, payments shall be refused.

The great flaw which dominates the entire administration of the Act is that the scheme involves weekly contributions out of the workers' wages and that whilst wage earners (with certain exceptions) are compelled to insure during employment; should they fall out of employment and consequently become unable to maintain their payments, they are deprived of benefit when subsequently stricken down by illness. Those who have passed through the anxiety and privations occasioned by unemployment are the people most likely to be taken ill. When at last we come to regard each other as equal members of our human family, we shall realise that it is the fact of being ill that should count, and that since those who are ill cannot and should not work, they and those dependent upon them must be maintained till the illness has passed. Unfortunately, the National Health Insurance Act is neither framed nor administered on this basis.

* * * *

Bethnal Green is a district of courts and alleys; dwellings are tucked away there in the most unexpected and inadequate places. Somewhere on the right-hand side of Globe Road you will find a narrow passage leading to Ashburton Houses. It is pitch dark at night; timid fastidious people pause to summon up their resolution before entering it, and then go warily, expecting to come into collision with something at every step. If you go on groping in the darkness, asking your way at every door, you will find an iron staircase leading to the upper houses. Houses! Well, knock at one of the doors and when it is opened you will find that that "house" consists of a single room, the rent of which is 4*s*. a week. The neighbours round about will tell you that these houses belong to Lady Ashburton. We do not know whether it is true, but we advise the owner of the property to rebuild it and reduce the rents. In the room are a truckle bed, a deal table, a few chairs, and a pair of clean white lace curtains hung across the centre of the room to divide it into two. Some stiff-necked people, it appears, cannot accustom themselves to living in a one-roomed house.

That charming young woman with the little rosebud mouth and the golden hair and sweet candid eyes, who is sitting by the fireside, is not Lady Ashburton; she is just a poor widow, having a hard struggle to make ends meet. "I am having all my troubles young," she says, and her voice seems to ask with wistful yearning whether her cup of hardship is not almost brimming over and whether there is a hideous possibility that there is no limit to the suffering which can be piled upon one poor, innocent human being. She was married at 16 years, and her eldest boy is now 17. She has six children, and her husband died four years ago. The Bethnal Green Guardians do not give Out Relief to widows; they only offer them the Workhouse, in which the children are separated from their mothers. "Woman's place is in the home"—when she has a husband to maintain it; but this woman's place was outside. She scrubbed the floors of L.C.C. schools from 6 to 9 every morning, then went straight to a feather curling establishment, where she worked till 4.30 or 5, when she went back to the cleaning of schools. On getting home at night she was often so much exhausted that she was obliged to fling herself on the bed. Then came a time when the feather curler had little work for her to do, and she could not buy food enough to still the hunger of all her children. So she was obliged to send her three elder girls to an orphanage at Woodford. Three times she contrived to bring them home again; but three times she was obliged to take them back. She smiles bravely, and as though trying to silence someone, says: "It's lovely at Woodford; they are very kind to them. I don't have to have a pass to see them. I can go whenever I can afford—but it broke my heart—nobody knows——" (Child pensions, poor mother, would have spared you this sorrow.)

For three and a half years she worked unceasingly, for twelve months for one employer; for two and a half years for another, and her insurance contributions were regularly paid week by week. Then a friend took her to a picture palace; she asked an attendant in the building to direct her. "Oh! just to the left," said the attendant. She saw a door ajar, pushed it open, took a step forward, and fell eight feet into the engine house. She lay for twenty minutes unconscious, then someone heard her groans. Her head was cut, her shoulder and elbow dislocated; she was terribly bruised. She was carried to the London Hospital, but she insisted on being taken home to her children whom she was afraid to leave. For five weeks she could not rise from the bed, and for a long time after that only with assistance; for eight months she could do no work, and even now her injured arm is shorter than the other; the elbow seems to be out of joint, she cannot straighten all her fingers, and she is often in pain. The Cinema Company has hitherto refused to compensate her for the accident; she has not received a penny from the National Insurance authorities. On claiming sickness benefit she was told that her approved society had only received cards containing thirteen stamps for 1913 and some emergency cards for 1915, and that therefore she was not entitled to benefit. She says that a long time ago, she thinks it was two and a half years, her agent asked her to give him her book and medical card in order that they might be changed, and told her to use emergency cards in the meantime. Shortly afterwards her agent enlisted and neither book nor medical card ever appeared. Working as she did to the point of exhaustion, not understanding the structure of the Insurance Act, we need not wonder if perhaps she has failed to comply with the usual formalities. The agent has enlisted; he may be killed; were he here he might be able to discover the missing cards. But whether or not the woman has erred in ignorance, the fact remains that in the time of her illness the benefits of the Insurance Act have been refused. Her employer, the feather curler, has supplied written testimony as to the fact of her employment and the stamping of her cards. But the Approved Society, supported by the Insurance Commissioners, refuses to pay.

In the meantime how has the woman existed? The accident took place on February 7th, 1917, and she was unable to return to work till a fortnight ago. Her eldest boy, who is a vanboy at the docks, was unemployed at the time of the accident, and was for some time obliged to remain at home to attend to his mother. At the best his work is intermittent, and though his wage for a full week was 18*s*., short time often caused him to receive very much less, and sometimes nothing at all. Once at the end of a week's unemployment a charitably disposed lady gave the family 2*s*.; once she gave them some potatoes. Two or three times a lawyer at Arbour Square Police Station gave a few shillings.

"I sold six leather-bottomed chairs," the widow tells us. "My clock, everything that would sell—things we'd worked hard for. I had to take the boots off their feet and pawn them; and her little coat." Her voice has a stifled cry in it; she looks at the four-year-old baby girl in the whitish cotton frock cast off by some bigger child, with old shoes and socks far too large for her, the latter wrinkled about her little legs like clumsy bandages. Clinging to the table, partly conscious of what is said, the child smiles at us, shy yet challenging; then runs to fling herself on the big boy sitting on the truckle bed in his shirt sleeves, his feet as shabbily clad as those of his baby sister. He takes her on his knees and plays with her, blowing into his hands. The merry-faced, shaggy-haired boy of nine peeps at us across the table, smiling too, but hunching his shoulders and twisting one leg about the other to hide from us his poor clothes and shoes. "Often I had to send my boy round to the neighbours to ask them for stale bread." "At Christmas, too," says the big lad ruefully.

* * * *

When the Insurance Act came into force the Gas Light and Coke Company started an approved insurance society for its employees. The company may have acted from motives of pure philanthropy, but it must be remembered that though the Insurance Bill, as originally drafted, debarred the great profit-making insurance companies from taking part in it, the companies fought strenuously to secure amendments to bring them within the scope of the Act, and succeeded in their endeavours.

One of the employees of the Gas Light and Coke Company who agreed to join its insurance scheme when the Act came into force, left the service of the Company on June 12th, 1915, and started work with the West London Co-operative Society, Fulham, two days later. When he left the Gas Light and Coke Company his insurance card was handed to him but not his book. The stamping of the card was continued by the Co-operative Society. In May, 1916, he left the Co-operative Society for work at Battersea. Since the commencement of the Act he had never had a week's unemployment and his insurance card had been fully stamped. Nevertheless, when on May 21st, 1916, he became seriously ill, suffering from appendicitis followed by blood poisoning and peritonitis, it was stated that his insurance contributions were in arrears and that he was suspended from all benefits. Inquiries brought a letter from the Gas Light and Coke

(*Continued on p.* 869, *col.* 1.)

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

THE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK.

Official figures on the increase in the cost of living show that whilst in this country the increase has now reached the enormous height of 97 per cent. (Food Controllers having done little to mitigate the rise), some of the neutral nations are suffering still greater hardships. In Holland the rural working classes are facing an increase of from 107 to 116 per cent, and the increase up to July last was 152 per cent. Holland is being cruelly harassed, on the one hand by Britain, on the other by Germany, and the struggle between these great Powers may drive her into the war against her will. *The Times* reports that the coal scarcity is causing the closing down of large numbers of Dutch factories, including the great Van Houten cocoa works and the well-known Sphinx pottery at Maastricht. Prior to the war 85 per cent of the coal imported into Holland came from Germany, 15 per cent from England. In the summer Germany announced that coal would only be supplied to Holland in return for potatoes, whilst Britain insisted that if any agricultural produce were sent to Germany an equal quantity must be sent to Britain. Thus Holland was obliged to send 25 per cent of her potatoes to Germany, 25 per cent to Britain, and potato rioting in Holland resulted. Whatever Holland endeavours to import or export is liable to bring her into difficulties and her own profiteers, of course, increase the embarrassments of the Government and the hardships of the people. No great Power would endure the position in which the belligerents are to-day placing the little nations. Mr. Troelstra, the Dutch Socialist leader and chairman of the Socialist Dutch-Scandinavian Peace Committee, before leaving Stockholm told *Social Demokraten* that he thought three or four months ago more favourable terms might have been secured from the Central Powers than could be got now. Asked when he would return to Stockholm he sadly replied: "Ask Lloyd George, Ribot, and Sonnino."

Russia still groans under her economic and political troubles. The German capture of Oesel Island will strengthen the hands of the Russian Maximalist Socialists, who declare that Russia's only salvation is in peace and the creation of a Socialist administration.

The strength of the Peace Movement which is behind the Independent Socialists of Germany may be estimated by the fact that the resignation of Admiral Von Capelle is announced as a result of his attack upon them. The German Minority and Majority Socialists are said to be drawing closer together, and there is an insistent demand from all progressive elements both in Germany and Austria for the resignation of the Chancellor Michaelis, and that the Reichstag shall be consulted in the appointment of ministers.

At the French Socialist Congress at Bordeaux the minority section only lost its motion to vote against war credits by 1,552 to 1,334. There were 85 abstentions. The majority is making concessions to the minority. Resolutions were passed in support of the Stockholm Conference and calling on the French Government to obtain from the Allies a common declaration making "international rights the sole basis of the national claims of any one of them."

A mutiny in the Austrian navy is reported.

The Italian Socialist paper *L'Avanti* was suppressed for a week and parts of it are frequently deleted by the censor.

The British Parliament reassembled on October 16th and carried on a futile discussion in a trivial spirit. This sort of thing is driving sections of the people towards anarchy. Thousands ardently desire some means in closer touch with the realities of daily life for transacting the nation's business.

In Canada a Coalition Government has been formed to enforce conscription. When will the peoples of the Empire begin to think?

THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL OF AMERICA.

From America comes a new publication, Vol. I., No. 4, of the *Bulletin of the People's Council of America*, which announces in terms borrowed from Russia that it held its "Constituent Assembly" in Chicago on August 31st and September 1st and 2nd, 1917. It is recorded that the authorities of the State of Illinois attempted to suppress this assembly, but the Chicago city authorities extended their protection to it. It had been intended originally to hold the meeting in Minneapolis, but the hall proprietors were warned against letting to the Council. It was then decided to meet in a tent, but the Governor of Minnesota forbade the meeting of the Council anywhere within the State. Nevertheless there is great enthusiasm in Minnesota for the objects of the Council, which, needless to say, is a peace council, and the farmers of the state travel hundreds of miles to any meeting on Democracy and Peace. Fargo, North Dacota, and Hudson, Wisconsin, also proved impossible as meeting places, and finally a special train was chartered to take the delegates to Chicago. When the train reached Syracuse at 11.30 P.M., an hour and a half late, 300 people were unexpectedly found to be waiting on the platform to cheer it. It appeared that 2,000 people had originally assembled. When the train reached Rochester at 1.30 A.M. the sleeping passengers were awakened by cheers and cries of "speech" from 400 people. There was no sign of the hostility and rotten egg throwing which the press had predicted. Over 300 delegates from widely distant parts of America met in Chicago; 25 were from California, 25 from South Dakota, 80 from New York. From Massachusetts to Texas and from Washington to Georgia almost every state was represented. The Conference urged that the United States Government should at once summon a world peace conference and declared that "the peoples of the world want the war to end" and that "the terms of peace are practically agreed upon by the peoples of the world." The Conference contended that "the only hope of a world 'made safe for democracy' is peace now and peace without victory."

The following persons were elected to the Executive Committee of the Council: James H. Maurer, Senator John D. Works, Seymour Stedman, Eugene Brock, Elizabeth Freeman, Morris Hillquit, Jacob Panken, Mrs. W. I. Thomas, Prof. H. L. Dana, George D. Roewer, N. A. Toohy, R. H. Howe, Rebecca Shelley, Dr. Walz, Lella Fay Secor.

Max Eastman, editor of *The Masses*, states in the Bulletin that the People's Council was organised because of President Wilson's flat refusal to endorse the Russian peace terms. The Chicago Conference was called for September 1st, and on August 29th Woodrow Wilson declared for "No punitive damages," no "dismemberment of empires," "vindication of the sovereignty both of those that are weak and those that are strong." This, says Max Eastman, was a reply, not to the Pope, "as naive people suppose," but to the People's Council. We must regretfully point out that if the flowery phrases of politicians would end the war it would have finished long ago. The People's Council of America has a long row to hoe; it would be stronger if it had more industrial backing.

TRAMS AND AIR RAIDS.

It was stated at a meeting of the L.C.C. on October 16th that drivers and conductors of L.C.C. trams may only seek shelter whilst the guns are actually firing and that in some cases where time has been lost during recent raids deductions from wages have been made. "Take Cover" warnings are for the free general public; not for the tram wage slaves it appears'! We want to know whether a woman conductor has been fined 30*s.* for leaving her bus during an air raid.

UNDER THE MILLSTONE.

(*Continued from p.* 868.)

Company's Employees' Insurance Society saying that no card had been received for the half year from January to July, 1915. The man had posted the card, but the society denied having received it: perhaps it was lost in the post.

THE GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY Employees Insurance Society,

as its name appears on the notepaper, was then asked to communicate with its parent body, the Gas Light and Coke Company, to ascertain whether during the half year in question the man's card had been duly stamped by the Company. The Gas Light and Coke Company was also asked to furnish this information for the use of its own Insurance Society.

The Gas Light and Coke Company ignored the request; the Gas Light and Coke Company's Employees' Insurance Society replied:—

"As the card was lost in transit it is a matter for the Man to apply to the Commissioners requesting their advice as to the best manner in which the card can be replaced. The Commissioners will then apply to the Gas Light and Coke Company for proof of stamping during the period of his employment with them and the desired information will undoubtedly be supplied without difficulty."

The facts were laid before the Insurance Commissioners, who adopted a most unsympathetic attitude, and wrote:—

"In no circumstances are the Commissioners able to make any allowance for stamps on cards lost whilst in the possession of contributors, unless there is conclusive evidence that the cards have been destroyed and not merely mislaid or lost."

Had the Commissioners been sympathetic, even though red tape had shamefully precluded them from crediting the man with the missing stamps, they might still have upheld his claim to benefit, for the Act provides in Clause 10, Section 1, that where an insured person who is a member of an approved society is more than 13 weeks in arrear "*on the average since his entry into insurance*" his right to sickness benefit shall be suspended. This man was *not* more than 13 weeks in arrear *on the average* since his entry into insurance. He became insured on the passage of the Act in December, 1911, and whilst he had never missed a single weekly contribution, 26 weekly contributions had nevertheless been lost as explained.

From their treatment of this and other cases we conclude that the Insurance Commissioners consider their duty to be not to protect the insured person, but to uphold the decision of the approved society against the worker.

In this particular case the attention of the Commissioners was drawn to the fact that as the man was employed during the period for which no card was to be found, either the card had been stamped or the employer was liable to a fine of £10 for each failure to stamp it, and also must pay up the arrears so that the employee might receive benefit.

Let us quote yet another case, that of a soldier's wife, who became an insured person at the beginning of 1914, through the medium of the Liverpool Victoria Approved Society. Her insurance book shows the following entries:—

EMPLOYEES INSURANCE SOCIETY.

Year ending July 5th, 1914.

26 weeks ending 11th Jan. 1914	Contributions paid	6
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness — ..	14
25 weeks ending 5th July, 1914	Contributions paid — ..	25
	Contributions not payable on account of arrears .. —	
Reserve Contributions		6
	Total	51
Penalty Arrears		nil.

Year ending July 4th, 1915.

Reserve balance brought forward		3
26 weeks ending 3rd Jan. 1915	Contributions paid	10
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness	
26 weeks ending 4th July, 1915	Contributions paid	8
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness ..	9
Reserve Contributions		3
	Total	33
Penalty Arrears		19

Year ending July 2nd, 1916

Reserve balance brought forward		
26 weeks ending 2nd Jan. 1916	Contributions paid	Nil.
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness	
26 weeks ending 1st July, 1917	Contributions paid	15
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness	
Reserve Contributions		3
	Total	18
Penalty Arrears		34

Year ending July 1st, 1917.

Reserve balance brought forward.		
26 weeks ending 2nd Dec. 1916	Contributions paid .. —	17
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness.. ..	24
26 weeks ending 1st July, 1917	Contributions paid	25
	Contributions not payable on account of sickness.. ..	
Reserve Contributions		
Penalty Arrears		

It will be seen that the 1917 account has not been balanced. How this will be done we cannot foresee. We wonder how the agent is going to explain the record of 17 contributions paid and 24 contributions not payable on account of sickness which occur in one period of 26 weeks, as these together add up to 41. Perhaps he will say that some of the payments were made by the soldier's wife to reduce the arrears recorded against her in the previous year; but he has not entered them as arrears, though a space is specially set aside for that purpose. Moreover, is it credible that a woman who was ill for 24 weeks out of the 26 would have paid off 15 weeks arrears at that time?

This soldier's wife was taken ill on August 1st, 1917, and on applying for benefit was told that she was ineligible because no contribution card had been received from her for the first half of 1915. She then began to study her insurance book, the entries in which she had never previously read, having dismissed them as mere technical formalities, entirely devoid of interest. She was astonished to find that she had been put down as entitled to full sickness benefit (7*s.* 6*d.* a week) at the time of her entry into insurance, though she was then under 21 years, and had only received sickness benefit at the rate of 5*s.* a week when ill during 1914. She was still more astonished to find all these payments of arrears and sickness benefit charged against her, though she had not been ill or away from work since 1914.

The Liverpool Victoria Approved Society justifies its denial of the claim as follows:—

"We are not in a position to authorise payment of benefit, as the member's contribution account for the year ending July 2nd, 1916 shows 34 penalty arrears as the following statement will show:—

Contributions paid up to and including Jan. 2, 1916	nil
Contributions paid up to and including July 2nd, 1916	15
Reserve .. .. .. — ..	3
Total	18

You will observe from the above statement that the member is 34 contributions short of the necessary 52 which are required to entitle the member to Sickness Benefit and in accordance with the Commissioners' regulations, she is suspended from all benefits, including medical and sanatorium, for a period of 12 months from the 6th of November last."

The soldier's wife is able to show that she has been regularly employed and that her cards have been stamped by her employer during the whole of the periods in dispute; and, further, that though she is eligible for unemployment benefit she has not applied for it, as she naturally would have done had she been unemployed.

Sometimes the insurance companies and their officials are efficient; sometimes inefficient. When ever a mistake occurs the worker suffers. These are the common constant wrongs that go unnoticed.

Whilst the Lords of the Earth are calling upon the people to aid in the War the people are being squeezed ever more cruelly between the upper and nether millstone.

E. Sylvia Pankhurst.

THE

WORKERS' SUFFRAGE FEDERATION

To secure a Vote for every Woman and Man of full age, and to win Social and Economic Freedom for the People on the basis of a Socialist Commonwealth.

Entrance Fee—1d.

Minimum Subscription—1d. a Month.

Central Office: 400 Old Ford Road, London, E.3
Hon. Secretary: Miss Sylvia Pankhurst.
Hon. Assistant Secretary: Mrs. Minnie Lansbury.
Hon. Financial Secretary: Miss Norah Smyth.

Address Correspondence on:—
Meetings, to Mrs. Bouvier.
W.S.F. Branches, Miss P. Lynch.
"Dreadnought," Miss O'Callaghan.
Other Literature, Miss Bush.

The W.S.F. appeals for members and workers and invites friends to visit its offices and social institutions.

CENTRAL OFFICE: 400 Old Ford Road, London, E.3.

THE MOTHERS' ARMS: 438 Old Ford Road, E.3. Mother and Doctors' Consultations and Baby Weighing, Mondays 2.30 P.M. Infant Clinic and Day Nursery, 8 A.M. to 7 P.M.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL: 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. (by appointment with Miss Muriel Matters) at the Mothers' Arms.

THE WOMEN'S HALL: 20 Railway Street (opposite South Bromley Station on the North London Railway). Mother and Infant Clinic, Doctors' Consultations and Baby Weighing, Mondays and Thursdays at 2.30 P.M. Cost Price Restaurant, &c.

53 ST. LEONARD'S STREET, BROMLEY: Mother and Infant Clinic, Literature depot, &c. Doctors' Consultations and Baby Weighing, Friday 10.30 A.M.

COST PRICE RESTAURANT: 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.3., and 20 Railway Street, Poplar.

ST. STEPHEN'S SHOP: 85 Hoxton Street, off Old Street, off Shoreditch. Literature on Communism, Feminism, Internationalism, Socialism.

CO-OPERATIVE TOY INDUSTRY: By appointment with Miss Norah Smyth.

THE WORKERS' CHOIR: Applications for Membership of Mrs. Herobergova, 45 Norman Road, E. Director and Conductor, Mr. Harold Cooper.

SOCIALIST SUNDAY SCHOOL: 20 Railway Street, Poplar. Sunday Afternoons, 3 P.M.

OUR FUNDS.

Donations to be sent to the Hon. Financial Secretary, Miss N. L. Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E3.
All parcels to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E3.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

GENERAL FUND.—Miss Ethel Lowy (10*s.* mthly.), £1; A. J. Marriott, Esq. (quarterly), 5*s.*; Miss Bush, 5*s.*; Miss Douglas, 1*s.* COLLECTIONS: Mrs. Walker (two), £1 4*s.* 2*d.*; General Meeting, 3*s.* 7½*d.*; Osborn Street, 1*s.* 8*d.*

"DREADNOUGHT" FUND.—Mr. and Mrs. Roden Buxton, £5; Mrs. C. E. Payne, £2; J. Leakey, Esq., £1 10*s.*; J. D. Pearce, Esq., £1 1*s.*; Mrs. Baillie-Weaver, £1; Miss Merritt (Card), 10*s.*; Mr. Everett (Card), 7*s.*; Miss P. Anderson, 5*s.*; Miss L. Bent, 2*s.* 6*d.*

DREADNOUGHT GUARANTEE FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £2 13*s.* 3*d.*

MILK AND GENERAL DISTRESS.—Nurse Ward, £2 5*s.* 10*d.*; per Miss Weir, £1 10*s.*; Nurse Hebbes (weekly), 10*s.*; Mrs. Kinsey Peile, 5*s.*; Miss A. Goodall, 5*s.*; Mr. W. J. Randall, 5*s.*; Mrs. E. M. Morrison (monthly), 5*s.* COLLECTIONS: L.S.A. Toolroom, £1 9*s.* 1½*d.*; Misses K. and E. Lagading, T. Barker, and Mrs. Bertram (Greens Yard and Cubitt Town), 14*s.* 1½*d.*; Bow Road Theosophical Club, 1*s.*

WHAT'S ON?

W.S.F. FIXTURES.

OUTDOOR.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20th.
Meetings at 3 P.M. and 7 P.M. See "Great Push."

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21st.
Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.30 A.M., Mrs. Walker.
Highbury Corner (United Socialist Council Meeting), 12 noon, Mrs. Bouvier.
Hyde Park, Marble Arch, 3.30 P.M., Mrs. Butler.
Finsbury Park, 3.30 P.M., Mrs. Walker.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27th.
Meetings at 12 (noon) and 3 P.M. See "Great Push."

INDOOR.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22nd.
53, St. Leonard's Street, 2.30 P.M., Miss Horsfall.
Bow Women's Hall, 8 P.M., Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, 'The Present Outlook,' Mr. Ph. Frankford, 'The Coming Day.' Chair, Miss N. L. Smyth.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25th.
29b, Lincoln's Inn Fields, 3.30 P.M., Signor Silvio Corio, 'Italy and the War.' Chair: Mrs. Bouvier.
St. Stephen's Shop, 85, Hoxton Street, 8.30 P.M., Miss Horsfall.

LEEDS.

LEEDS.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Hunter, 7 Sugdenfold, Armley. Branch meeting, Clarion Café, Tuesdays, 8 p.m. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 104.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS EDUCATION.

Class in

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WATER LANE HIGHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, STRATFORD, E.,

Commencing Sunday, Oct. 21st, at 3.30 p.m.

Apply Secretary, K. E. READ, 85 Central Park Road, East Ham, E.6.

A postcard to secretary will bring a member of Committee to your branch meeting to explain object of class.

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Free Food, Law Love, Temple Truth, Sovran Self.
Songs and Recitals by ALEXANDER HUNTER, 37 Collingwood Road, Coventry.—"Fine Voice." "Powerful Reciter."

FEDERATION NOTES

BIG PUSH.

ON Saturday a very good Peace meeting was held at the Grove, Stratford. Mrs. Walker in a very impressive speech dealt with the Alsace Lorraine Question, and told her large and interested audience that in 1870 the Government of this country was in sympathy with Prussia, and that the English children in the Channel Islands (of which Mrs. Walker is a native) were encouraged to insult their French school-fellows by shouting "Vive la Prusse." A good collection was taken and literature was sold and distributed.

PEACE PICKETS.

ON Sunday morning a Peace Banners Parade was held outside Westminster Abbey and Cathedral. Outside the latter the banner "Support the Pope's Move for Peace" made a deep impression. The following characteristic remarks were overheard: "This is the best and cleverest thing I have yet seen, you are not Roman Catholics, for if you were, you would not have the courage to come here" (this by a woman); "This kind of thing would drag the Roman Catholic Church in the Pacifist movement; go away, we have come to Mass, we don't want Peace" (this by a man, well over military age who viciously snatched away one of the banners). More volunteers for Peace Parades will be welcome.

BRANCHES.

MEETINGS are held every Monday evening at 400, Old Ford Road, at 8 P.M. A very interesting series of lectures has been arranged, and we hope that members will make them known as widely as possible. Bow members are urged to attend in good time, as it is proposed to discuss Bow Branch business at the commencement of the meetings. Miss Tollemache will be present to receive subscriptions.

The Thursday evening At Homes have been transferred from the Emerson Club to 29b, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. Copies of the Postcard Syllabus may be obtained from this Office. We wish members to use these as postcards in corresponding with friends.

ON Monday night Mrs. Cedar Paul gave an interesting lecture on 'Militarism and Birth Control, illustrated by charts and a map showing the growth of population in the European countries since the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. An animated discussion followed, and some of the questions which were raised drew from our lecturer the promise to come again and deal with another aspect of the same question. The attendance was fairly good and members and friends are urged to have a good muster next Monday when Miss Sylvia Pankhurst and Mr. Ph. Frankford will be the speakers. Miss N. L. Smyth in the chair. It will be a dark night.—J. A. B.

ON Sunday afternoon a meeting was held on Hampstead Heath. Mrs. Walker was the speaker. The audience was a mixed one, consisting of wounded soldiers and officers and Trade Unionists, who were conspicuous by their Trade Union badge. The subject was 'Socialism and Votes for All,' also the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Mrs. Walker portrayed for her audience what was to be seen in East London—little, poorly-clad, bootless children buying coals at 7 lbs. a time, and how scandalous it was for the Government to raise the price of coal, which means the children's health will suffer through lack of warmth. Eighty-six *Dreadnoughts* were sold; 30*s.* collection—27*s.* in silver, 3*s.* in coppers. The first to throw a shilling in the ring was a taxi-driver. A serjeant in khaki made the collection up to 30*s.* by adding 3*s.*—M. W.

LEYTON AT HOME.

THE At Home organised by the Leyton W.S.F. at 42 Forest Lane, was greatly enjoyed. There was a delightful children's pageant, arranged by Miss Bridges and Miss Gallop. Miss Dorothy Matthews and Nellie Enefer recited, and pianoforte solos and duets were given by Miss Lagading, Miss Shaw and Miss Ethel Smith. Speeches by Miss Sylvia Pankhurst and Mr. Edward Fuller were heard with great attention. A profit of 12*s.* was made. Leyton members gave the tea and Mrs. Brimley, Mrs. Shaw and others gave great help in many ways. Hon. Sec., Mrs. Hart, 73 Calderon Road, Leyton.

HOLLOWAY.

HOLLOWAY W.S.F. had a very successful meeting on Monday, October 15th, at the Co-operative Hall, 144 Seven Sisters Road, N. After formal Branch business an able address was given by Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, who mentioned the difficulties *The Dreadnought* had gone through in being held up by the authorities. The Branch passed the following resolution: "That this meeting of the W.S.F. condemns the action of the authorities in suppressing *The Dreadnought*, and wishes to know the reason. A copy of this resolution is to be sent to the Home Secretary and Prime Minister. At our next meeting we are going to consider the advisability of affiliating with the Local Trades and Labour Party. We intend to have a strong live branch in Holloway. Two new members joined the Branch, and we hope others will follow. A. CAVE, *Hon. Sec.*

OLD COCKNEY FAIR.

THE first meeting of the Old Cockney Fair Committee; was held on Monday, October 15th, at 5 P.M., at 29b, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. Miss Tollemache was elected Secretary to the Committee.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS.

FAMILY LIMITATION DOCTRINE. Post free, 1½d.—Malthusian League, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster.

SUFFRAGE WORKERS should spend their holidays at "Sea View," Victoria Road, Brighton. Hostess, Miss Turner.

TO LET—HALL for meetings, &c., holds 60. Terms moderate.—Apply Miss Beamish, St. Stephen's Shop, 85 Hoxton Street, N.

TYPEWRITING REQUIRED at home; MSS. and Plays; Duplicating accurately done. Terms on application.—Apply Miss A. O. Beamish, 85 Hoxton Street.

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IMPORTANT.

WE gladly call the attention of our readers to the East London class in 'Industrial History,' of which full particulars appear in our advertisement columns. This class is organised by a committee of Trade Unionists and members of the B.S.P., I.L.P., and W.S.F. It is the first step towards starting in East London such classes as those which the Central Labour College provided for its students during recent years, and which students of the C.L.C. have carried into South Wales with such successful results in arousing the workers as to have called forth the bitter resentment of *The Times*.

IS LANCASHIRE RUSSIA?

A RUSSIAN who left London some time ago to return to Russia writes from Lancashire as follows:—

"You are of course aware that our party of Russians has been here for two weeks now 'waiting for a boat.' We leave this camp to-night probably for Newcastle. On the 29th ult. we went on board ship at Liverpool, but after a few days we had to abandon this ship as she was foul end to end. That our ship was torpedoed and set on fire are only rumours; there is no truth in them."

JOIN OUR GREAT PUSH FOR PEACE! SOCIALISM! VOTES FOR ALL!

ORGANISED BY THE WORKERS' SUFFRAGE FEDERATION, 400 OLD FORD ROAD, E.3.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20th, KENSAL RISE.—Meet 2.45 p.m. at 10 MILMAN ROAD, WEST KILBURN (No. 6 Bus from Bishopsgate). Secretary for the day: Mrs. EDWARDS, 30 Clifford Gardens, N.W.10. Meetings: 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. BIRCH, Mrs. BOUVIER, Mrs. WALKER, Mr. H. G. RUSSELL.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27th, SOUTH EAST DISTRICT.—Meet at 11.30 a.m. and at 2.30 p.m. at 85 CAMBERWELL GROVE. Secretary for the day: MRS. COLE, 85 Camberwell Grove. Meetings 12 (noon) and 3 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. BIRCH, Mrs. BOUVIER, Miss LYNCH, Mrs. WALKER.

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